

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 83rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2001
4

As Engrossed: S3/12/01 S4/9/01

A Bill

Act 1731 of 2001
HOUSE BILL 1940

5 By: Representative C. Johnson
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS GEOGRAPHICAL
10 CRITICAL NEEDS MINORITY TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP
11 PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

14 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS
15 GEOGRAPHICAL CRITICAL NEEDS MINORITY
16 TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.
17
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas
22 Geographical Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship Program Act of 2001."
23

24 SECTION 2. (a) There is established the "Critical Needs Minority
25 Teacher Scholarship Program".

26 (b) The purpose of the Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship
27 Program is to attract qualified minority teachers to the Delta and those
28 geographical areas of this state where there exists a critical shortage of
29 teachers by awarding full scholarships to minorities declaring an intention to
30 serve in the teaching field who actually render service to this state while
31 possessing an appropriate teaching license.
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33 SECTION 3. (a) The term "minority" when used in this act shall refer
34 to Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans,
35 which group includes all persons having origins in any of the original peoples
36 of North America and who maintain cultural identification through tribal

1 affiliation or community recognition.

2 (b) Any individual who is a minority and is enrolled in or accepted for
3 enrollment at a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher learning
4 whose teacher education program is approved by the State Board of Education or
5 at an accredited state supported community college in the State of Arkansas
6 who expresses in writing an intention to teach in a geographical area of the
7 state in which there exists a critical shortage of teachers, as designated by
8 the State Board of Education, shall be eligible for a financial scholarship to
9 be applied toward the costs of the individual's college education, if:

10 (1) Except as provided in subsection (b)(2), the applicant has
11 successfully completed the core curriculum established by the State Board of
12 Education and Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board pursuant to § 6-61-
13 217;

14 (2) An applicant who meets the provisions of subdivisions (b)(1)
15 through (4) of this section, but who has not completed the core curriculum
16 defined in subdivision (b)(1) of this section by the end of the senior year of
17 high school due to the unavailability of the courses in the applicant's high
18 school, shall have a grace period of twelve (12) months from the date of high
19 school graduation in which to make up any course deficiencies required for
20 program eligibility.

21 (3)(A) The applicant has demonstrated proficiency in the
22 application of knowledge and skills in reading and writing literacy and
23 mathematics by passing the end of course examinations as may be developed by
24 the Department of Education and as *may be designated by the University of*
25 *Arkansas at Pine Bluff* for this purpose.

26 (B) "End of course" examinations shall mean those
27 examinations defined in § 6-15-419(4).

28 (C) The applicant must have achieved a grade point average
29 of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale in the set of core curriculum courses.

30 (4) The applicant scored nineteen (19) or above on the American College
31 Test composite or the equivalent as defined by the *University of Arkansas at*
32 *Pine Bluff*;

33 (5)(A) The *University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff* is authorized to
34 develop selection criteria through program rules and regulations which combine
35 an applicant's American College Test or equivalent score and grade point
36 average in the core curriculum into a selection index.

1 (B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions
2 (b)(3)(C) and (b)(4) of this section, this selection index shall be employed
3 as an alternative selection process for applicants who achieve a grade point
4 average above 2.75 if attending an approved two-year institution or 3.0 if
5 attending a four-year institution on a 4.0 scale in the set of core curriculum
6 courses defined in subdivision (b)(1) of this section, or for applicants who
7 have an American College Test composite or equivalent score greater than
8 nineteen (19).

9 (c) The annual amount of the scholarship shall be one thousand five
10 hundred dollars (\$1,500) per year.

11 (d) Awards made to nonresidents of the state shall not include any
12 amount assessed by the college or university for out-of-state tuition.

13 (e)(1) Awards granted under the Critical Needs Minority Teacher
14 Scholarship Program shall be available to both full-time and part-time
15 students.

16 (2) Students enrolling on a full-time basis may receive a maximum
17 of four (4) annual awards.

18 (3) The maximum number of awards that may be made to students
19 attending school on a part-time basis, and the maximum time period for part-
20 time students to complete the number of academic hours necessary to obtain a
21 baccalaureate degree in education, shall be established by rules and
22 regulations jointly promulgated by the *University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*
23 and the Department of Education.

24 (4) Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarships shall not be
25 based upon an applicant's eligibility for financial aid.

26
27 SECTION 4. (a) Except in those cases where employment positions may
28 not be available upon completion of licensure requirements, at the beginning
29 of the first school year in which a recipient of a Critical Needs Minority
30 Teacher Scholarship is eligible for employment as a licensed teacher, that
31 person shall begin to render service as a licensed teacher in a public school
32 district in a geographical area of the state where there is a critical
33 shortage of teachers, or in the Delta, as designated by the Department of
34 Education.

35 (b)(1) Any person who received four (4) annual awards, or the
36 equivalent of four (4) annual awards, shall render four (4) years' service as

1 a licensed teacher.

2 (2) Any person who received fewer than four (4) annual awards or
3 the equivalent of four (4) annual awards, shall render one (1) year's service
4 as a licensed teacher for each year that the person received a full-time
5 student scholarship, or for the number of academic hours equivalent to one (1)
6 school year, as determined by the *University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*, for
7 which a part-time student received a scholarship.

8 (c) Students receiving a Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship
9 shall execute a note made payable to the *University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*
10 for an amount equal to the scholarship award each semester that shall bear
11 interest at the rate of ten percent (10%) per year beginning September 1 after
12 completion of the program, or immediately after termination of the scholarship
13 loan, whichever is earlier.

14 (d)(1) Any person failing to complete a program of study which will
15 enable the person to become a licensed teacher shall begin repaying the note
16 according to the note's terms for the sum of all scholarship awards made to
17 that person less the corresponding amount of any awards for which service has
18 been rendered.

19 (2) Any person failing to complete their teaching obligation, as
20 required under subsection (b) of this section, shall begin repaying the note
21 according to the note's terms for the sum of all scholarship awards made to
22 that person less the corresponding amount of any awards for which service has
23 been rendered, except in the case of a deferral of debt for cause approved by
24 the State Board of Education if there is no employment position immediately
25 available upon a teacher's completion of licensure requirements.

26 (e) After the period of the deferral, the person shall begin or resume
27 teaching duties as required under subsection (4) or shall become liable on the
28 note under subsection (d) of this section. If a claim for payment under
29 subsection (c) is placed in the hands of an attorney for collection, the
30 obligor shall be liable for an additional amount equal to a reasonable
31 attorney's fee.

32 (f) The obligations made by the recipient of a Critical Needs Minority
33 Teacher Scholarship award shall not be voidable by reason of the age of the
34 student at the time of receiving the scholarship.

35 (g) The *University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff* and the Department of
36 Education shall jointly promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the

1 proper administration of the Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship
2 Program.

3 (h) The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff shall be the administering
4 agency of the program.

5 (i) If sufficient funds are not available to fully fund scholarship
6 awards to all eligible students, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
7 shall make the awards to first-time students on a first-come, first-served
8 basis. However, priority consideration shall be given to persons previously
9 receiving awards under the Critical Needs Minority Teacher Scholarship
10 Program.

11 (j) All funds received by the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff from
12 the repayment of scholarship awards by program participants shall be deposited
13 in the fund that provides funding for the Critical Needs Minority Teacher
14 Scholarship Program.

15 (k)(1) The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff shall make an annual
16 report to the General Assembly.

17 (2) Each report shall contain a complete enumeration of the
18 program's activities, scholarships granted, names of persons to whom granted,
19 and the institutions attended by those receiving the scholarships, the
20 teaching location of applicants who have received their education and become
21 licensed teachers within this state as a result of the scholarships.

22 (3) The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff shall make a full
23 report and account of receipts and expenditures for salaries and expenses
24 incurred under this section.

25 (4) The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff shall, upon its
26 records and any published reports, distinguish between those recipients who
27 have breached their contracts but with the University's permission who have
28 paid their financial obligations in full, and those recipients who have
29 breached their contracts and remain financially indebted to the state.

30 (l) The requirements of this act are contingent on the funding
31 available for the Arkansas Geographical Critical Needs Minority Teacher
32 Scholarship Program.

33 (m) The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff is authorized to determine
34 the necessary procedures for the awarding of forgivable loans should the
35 number of eligible applicants and recipients exceed the funds available, so
36 long as the procedures are consistent with subsection (i) of this section.

/s/ C. Johnson

APPROVED: 4/18/2001

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